

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:MLDURKEE:JL

APPROVED BY EUR - MR. BARBOUR

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 163795

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, PFOR, SP

SUBJECT: US-SPANISMILITARY RELATIONS

1. SPANISH DCM CALLED JULY 13 ON EUR
TO EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT THE PROBLEM RAISED BY
THE MAYOR OF ROTA IN HIS EFFORT TO COLLECT MUNICIPAL
CIRCULATION TAX FROM US PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO USNAVSTA.
DCM DID NOT PRESS ANY LEGAL ARGUMENTS ABOUT INTERPRETATION
OF THE 1976 TREATY, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT WAS A LOCAL
POLITICAL PROBLEM, AND AGREED THAT THE QUESTION SHOULD
CONTINUE TO BE HANDLED IN THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON
POLITICO-MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS. THE APPARENT
PURPOSE OF HIS APPROACH WAS TO UNDERLINE THEIR HOPE THAT
WE WILL BE ABLE TO FIND SOME CONCRETE WAY TO HELP THEM
DEAL WITH THE PRESSURE FROM THE MAYOR, THUS AVOIDING
POSSIBLE PUBLIC CONTROVERSY ABOUT THE US BASES.

2. DCM ALSO MENTIONED SPANISH ARMY CONCERN, EXPRESSED TO
UNDER SECRETARY BENSON DURING HER RECENT VISIT, ABOUT
EROSIVE EFFECT OF INFLATION AND PRODUCTION LEADTIMES ON
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REAL VALUE OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE UNDER THE TREATY. IN
THE ABSENCE OF INSTRUCTIONS, HE HAD NO SPECIFIC REQUEST BUT

WANTED US TO BE AWARE THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HOPED WE
WOULD BE ABLE TO SUGGEST SOME SOLUTION; HE ACKNOWLEDGED
THAT INFLATION WAS A COMMON PROBLEM AND NO ONE COULD
GUARANTEE IMMUNITY FROM ITS EFFECTS. HE ALSO EXPRESSED

UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHETHER THIS MATTER WOULD BE PRESSED,
GIVEN THE RECENT RESTRUCTURING OF THE CABINET AND
MILITARY SERVICES. VANCE

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